

REMARKS

As a result of the foregoing amendments to the independent claims, Applicants believe that the distinctions between the claimed invention in this application and the disclosure of the cited references have been further clarified. In particular, the disclosure in the present application which forms the basis for the independent claims herein is depicted clearly, for example, in Figs. 8A, 8B, and 8C, wherein the “second region” of the claims is illustrated at reference numeral 105, corresponding to the thin protective layer. The claim also requires that the first and second regions are disposed only between the electrodes. In this regard, as shown for example in Fig. 8A of the drawings, element 105 is closer to the discharge port than the relatively thicker first region. As will be appreciated, this structure permits a greater compactness in the ejection head.

Referring now to the Ozaki patent, Applicants note the Examiner’s comment in the sentence at the bottom of Page 2 of the Office Action, wherein it states with reference to Ozaki “Looking at Figs. 2 and 7, it can be seen that the second region is closer to the nozzle than the first region.” Applicants respectfully submit that Figs. 2 and 7 of Ozaki do not show the concept of a second region being closer to the nozzle than the first region. Instead, in Fig. 2 of Ozaki both of the first and second regions 108a and 108b, between the electrodes, are just as close to the ejection port which is at the left end of Fig. 2. Accordingly, it is clear that Fig. 2 of Ozaki does not show the second region being closer to the discharge port than the first region. Also, referring to Fig. 7 of the drawings in Ozaki, that figure fails to show any relationship at all between the first and second regions, since the reference numeral 1103 refers merely to a “electrothermal converter” and does not specify its construction.

Similarly, Applicants respectfully submit that the other cited references also fail to disclose the proximity of the thinner second region to the discharge port.

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Respectfully submitted,


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